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WHAT THE SOLDIERS SAW:  
THE SEASONALLY ORDERED DESCRIPTION  
OF LANDSCAPES IN VĀKPATI'S GAUḌAVAHA 513-658 \*

§ 0. *The poet and his poem*

Vākpāti is a younger contemporary and fellow court-poet at Kānaūj of Bhavabhūti. One hero of his poem is Yaśovarman, king of Kānaūj in the first half of the 8th C. A.d.

The Gauḍavaha (abbr.: G.) is a wonderful Kāvya, in Māhārāṣṭrī Prākṛit. It has no sargas. Nevertheless, it can easily be divided into sections. Vākpāti plunges *medias in res* time and again, but mostly he neatly concludes a passage with a verse that tells us how we have to understand the preceding passage. For instance, G. 658 reads *iya sayala-disā-aḍa-viaya-miliya-maṇḍalehiṃ saccaviyā / seṇā-bhaḍehiṃ se suhaya-saṃnivesā vaṇuddesā //*, "In this way fine-looking spots in forests were observed by his army's soldiers, to whom the world was connected with victory in all farthest quarters." Another lengthy passage that is concluded in this manner is: "Ways of the world", G. 857-1006, but mostly the passages so concluded are much shorter, ten-fifteen verses or less. If we call the smallest unit a 'section', regardless

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of its being a section or sub-section, then 62 sections can be discerned, mostly coinciding with those of Pandit 1927, CCLXXIII ff.; for my own division see Van Daalen 1992 n. 9.

The poem tells us about the hero's campaign of world-conquest, which led him from Kanauj to the Son River with the temple of Vindhyavāsini, to Bengal, along the Eastern coasts, to the Southern king, through the Malaya Mountain towards the Western Coast, to Persia, back again to the Narmadā River, Rājasthān, the Himālayas, (G. 192-512). What the soldiers saw during the campaign is described in G. 513-658. Follows a description of the sad state of the cities of the conquered kings, (G. 659-688). From G. 737 we learn that the king is at Kanauj again. The king's love life is described in G. 738-796. Vākpati, the court-poet, is introduced in G. 797-803. Court paṇḍits tell him that the king need to be praised. Vākpati prevaricates, at G. 1207-1209, he announces that he is going to tell the hero's life-story, he says "Listen", and that is the end of the poem.

The poet has prepared us for this open end. He has stated a number of times that he and his colleagues, when faced with true greatness, are overwhelmed with awe – a religious awe we would say for the hero is a *cakravartin*, and as such an incarnation of Viṣṇu, on which see below –, begin to stammer and cannot speak any more. By falling silent he shows what he had foretold. See further Van Daalen 1986.

In the very last sentence of the poem (G. 1207-1209) the word *viayāhisea*, Skt. *vijayābhiṣeka*, is used, 'Triumphal Unction', marking the last stage of the consecration of a *cakravartin*, a universal monarch. That the hero is one, is the Leitmotiv of the poem. So on the one hand the poem is open-ended, but on the other hand its Leitmotiv is brought to a conclusion at its very end.

Indications to this *cakravartin*ship are scattered throughout the poem, but not at random. The places of preference are the structurally important places, first and foremost the ends of sections, where, as we saw above, we are told how the preceding passage fits into the poem's structure. The other way round, when we look at the 62 ends of the sections, we see 30 times an indication that the hero is a *cakravartin*, or at least a good king. We can say that the Leitmotiv and the poem's structure are coherent. See further Van Daalen 1992.

§ 1. *The apparent disorder in G. 513-658*

So, in my opinion the poem as a whole is structured wonderfully. What about its constituent parts? This article is concerned with one of those parts, the description of the landscapes the soldiers saw, (G. 513-658), and the question is: is there an order or even a structure in this section?

Warder, whose views on the poem as a whole will not detain us now, writes: «There are many clusters, *kulakas*, of verses elaborating descriptive topics, such as the seasons, which occur in the narrative, but the longest of these (G. 513-658) is a miscellaneous collection of things seen during the campaign already described. They are thus gathered as a separate anthology instead of being given in the relevant contexts of the campaign itself. This is like an expression of contempt for epic form by the poet» (1983, 402).

Pandit, the first editor of the text (1887), says of the passage: «And now follows a *kulaka* of one hundred and forty-six couplets, giving a description of the various objects, scenes, temples, lakes, forests, rivers, trees, and other things that his army had seen in the course of their expedition. It does not appear that the objects are taken up for description in any particular order, such as geographical, or the order of the line of his journey, or of the seasons, but are mentioned at random. Nor is it possible to identify many of the localities referred to by the descriptions given, as few names are mentioned. To convey an idea of the manner in which the poet treats this part of his subjects, it will suffice to say, that first come certain lake scenes, then follows a description of some high mountains, followed by that of villages on the banks of large lakes; then come marshy lands, followed by shores covered by little shells and so on» (1927, XXIX f.).

Pandit's summary is not entirely correct. Its beginning is all right: «We find the lake scenes in G. 513-523; mountains at G. 524; (rivers at G. 525); villages on the banks of lakes at G. 526; lowlands in G. 527-531; shores covered by little shells at G. 530. It is Pandit's "and so on" that is misleading. It is true, there will be introduced a number of elements more, but, on the other hand, many elements will be mentioned again and again. And this feature cannot be described by "and so on".

Warder remarks that the descriptions are not "given in the relevant contexts of the campaign itself". This is correct, or rather it is correct partly only. For the poet did what Warder asks for at the beginning of the campaign. In G. 270-279 Winter is described and the fields the hero saw just before he reached the Son River. G. 280-284 are concerned with the Vindhya Mountains. After the intermezzo of the stay at the temple of Vindhyaśinī (G. 285-338) and the hero's fancies when he saw a corpse (G. 339-347) there is a long description of various landscapes in Summer, in the transition period and in the Rains, (G. 348-413). The people of the camp are explicitly mentioned at G. 381; and the king is so at G. 355 and G. 413, where he is said to proceed in the Rains. The next hundred verses sketchily depict the expedition throughout India, and are filled to a large extent with the description of events from the mythical past that occurred at the places concerned: G. 424-430, Vālin's victory over Rāvaṇa; G. 440-459, king Pṛthu levelling the earth; G. 460-465, the lovesick Narmadā; G. 466-470, the emergence of the bowl of *amṛta* from the ocean; G. 471-494, events out of the Mahābhārata; G. 495-508, Hariścandra's city flying to heaven; G. 509-510, Mandara and the churning of the ocean, 68 verses in all. That is twice the average, for roughly a third of the poem is devoted to mythology. One can speculate on the reason why these particular stories were chosen: the hero, a *cakravartin* himself, is connected with the first king and *cakravartin* Pṛthu, with another *cakravartin* Hariścandra; with the victory over evil: Rāvaṇa, Mahābhārata, with the emergence of *amṛta*. In the verse that introduces the hero, G. 99, he is said to have delighted Indra on account of the removal of *durīya*, Skt. *durita*, 'discomfort, evil', from the entire world. Be this how it may, the poet is concerned with myths, not with geography. To ask for geographical descriptions in this part of the poem is to ask for a different poem.

According to Pandit an order is not discernable in G. 513-658 either in terms of geography or otherwise. In fact, as far as I am aware, there are no verses specially concerned with Southern, Middle, Western India. The description seems to be limited to Northern India and Bengal. So the verses cannot be distributed over the other parts of India in a sensible manner. The question must be what the poet did and why. I shall return to these questions.

Both Pandit and Warder state that there is no order in the passage at issue. To avoid misunderstandings: I shall not argue that every single verse necessarily occupies the place it has got now.

Look for instance at G. 570-573; G. 570 describes ponds with water and day lotuses floating in them (a); G. 571 depicts pondlets with dry bottoms (a<sup>1</sup>); at G. 572 there is a burning forest-fire (b), at G. 573 there is a recent forest-fire (b<sup>1</sup>). The season is Summer. There are more verses which describe the effects of forest-fires, also in Spring, but only at the Summer verse G. 572 there is a burning fire. It is clear a and a<sup>1</sup> belong together, and so do b and b<sup>1</sup>. But the order might have been inverted: a<sup>1</sup> - a, b<sup>1</sup> - b; b or b<sup>1</sup> might have been put in the first place. The question why the order is as it is, a - a<sup>1</sup>, b - b<sup>1</sup>, is not a good one. The poet wanted to depict a varied scenery. And it is clear that the effect of alternate landscapes can be reached by various arrangements of the individual verses. This remark applies to the passage as a whole. The effect of the alternation is a fact that must be explained. It was stated above that the poet wanted it; why should he? Remember that what is described is what the soldiers saw, during more than two years, as will be explained below. And they marched through a varied scenery. Imagine a poet who would have ordered his description according to types of landscapes: lakes, marshy grounds, valleys with meadows and villages, higher grounds with fields, villages in the latter and on the slopes of hills; jungle on the hills and mountains, and so on, ending with the top of the highest mountain - a perfect logical order, but highly unnatural. This was not an expedition towards the top of Mt. Everest, but it went through the whole of India. The effect of alternate landscapes now reached by the poet is fictional, of course, but natural, at least I think it is intended to be so.

That the time that passed by is more than two years, we know from the succession of the seasons. For in contradistinction to what Pandit says there is an order of the seasons.

### § 2.1. *Some seasons are explicitly mentioned*

At a number of places seasons are mentioned explicitly, at G. 516 and 600, *sisira*, and at G. 603 *hemanta*, do not refer to the running

season, so they will not detain us now. At ten other places there are explicit references to the season described, viz.: G. 532, *bālasaraya*-, early Autumn; G. 569, *gimha*, Summer; G. 586 and 592, *sisira*, late Winter; G. 596 and 604 *mahu*, G. 603 *māhava*, Spring; G. 640 *vāsā-gama*, advent of the Rains; G. 654, *jalaya-samaya*, Rains; G. 657 *saraya*, Autumn. The order of the seasons in the description is not self-evident from these references. However, the picture changes if we fill in the data obtained from the time of flowering, fructification and maturation of the trees, shrubs and plants mentioned.

## § 2.2. *Botanical data treated in the appendix*

An account of these data is given in the appendix. A short summary of what the text says is followed there by what can be learnt from botanical handbooks, or in the absence of useful references to these handbooks, followed by references to other literary texts. Since in some parts of India the lotus flowers more or less the whole year round, the lotus is left out from this account generally. And so are other data the text yields as there are: mud, dust, forest-fires and so on. These fit in into the picture obtained.

A Pkt./Skt. botanical name may refer to various species or even various genera. As a rule the diverse possible identifications have not been discussed. Some of them have been chosen in preference to others because they fitted into the picture of the succession of seasons that was emerging. There is something of a hermeneutic circle here. Notwithstanding some difficulties, – G. 530 in particular is vexing – we can be reasonably sure about the whole. The material does not allow to distinguish between Hemanta and Śisira; there is Winter only.

We see the succession of Rains, Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer. Next two verses on the Rains, G. 584-585. The Autumn is absent here. Then follow: Winter, Spring, Summer, Rains, Autumn. Eleven seasons in all. For the sake of convenience I have already given the exact lengths of the description of each season in the appendix, although it does not immediately follow from the account in all the cases. The ten joints will be discussed now.

## § 2,3. The ten joints

Seven of the ten joints can be pointed out easily: at six of these seven joints or very near to them the respective seasons are mentioned explicitly. Herebelow the words "is/are explicitly mentioned" will not be repeated. Just the English name of the season will be put after the verse-number; for the Pkt. words used see the appendix. These seven joints are:

- G. 532/533, Autumn/Winter. G. 532 Autumn; G. 533 the *karamanda* flowers, Jan./May.
- G. 567/569, Spring/Summer. (G. 568 is transmitted only by one of the four mss., Dc, after G. 569. If it should be kept in the text at all, it should be placed at the place where the ms. reads it); G. 567 pods of the *palāśas*, early May; G. 569 Summer.
- G. 583/584, Summer/Rains. G. 583 *karahāt.a* flowers in the hot season; G. 584 the *kadamba* that flower in the Rains.
- G. 585/586 Rains/Winter. G. 585 *priyaṅgu* flowers in the Rainy season; G. 586 Late Winter.
- G. 594/595 Winter/Spring. G. 592 Late Winter; G. 594 *mādhavi* flowers Jan./March; G. 595 new foliage; G. 596 Spring.
- G. 605/606 Spring/Summer. G. 603 and 604 Spring; G. 605 the mangoes have nearly finished flowering; G. 606 ripe mangoes.
- G. 655/656 Rains/Autumn. G. 653 *kadamba* that flowers in the Rains; G. 654 Rains; G. 655 recent down pours; G. 656 the clouds are gone; G. 657 Autumn.

So nine out of the ten season names that refer to the current season in the passage occur at a joint or very near to it. It is an easy guess that the tenth one occurs at a joint likewise; there is nothing in the context which contradicts it: at G. 640 the advent of the Rains is mentioned; G. 639 contains a reference to mist in mountains, which is to be regarded as a literary harbinger of the next season. So G. 639/640 is another joint.

G. 513 with its *kadambas* clearly refers to the Rains. G. 517 with its geese refers to Autumn. G. 516 is not discriminatory. And so are, to a lesser extent, G. 514 f. with their lotuses. I have placed the joint at G. 516/517.

We must determine still one more joint. As we saw already G. 533 refers to Winter. The *karīras* at G. 534 flower Oct./June. The

*arkas* at G. 535 flower all the year round. The fragrance of the lotuses in this verse points to Spring rather than to Winter, since lotuses are frozen to death in the Gangetic plains in Winter. At G. 543 winds are cool near water. The shade under trees is warm at G. 545. There are hints to dust storms both in this verse and at G. 544. So the heat has already been building up. The season hinted at here is March/April, rather than Winter. I have placed the joint at G. 534/535.

#### § 2.4. *The composition of the passage*

The Rainy season has been described thrice; the shortest description is G. 584 f., the longest one is G. 640-655, whereas the passage starts with a description of the Rainy season of intermediate length.

After G. 585 the autumnal season is absent; if we call this the shortest description, the longest one is G. 517-532 and the passage ends with a description of Autumn of intermediate length. There are two descriptions of each of the other seasons. In the survey below "short" and "long" mean shorter, resp. longer, than the other description of the same season. What we see is this:

G. 513-516	Rains	4 verses	intermediate
G. 517-532	Autumn	16 verses	longest
G. 533-534	Winter	2 verses	short
G. 535-567	Spring	33 verses	long
G. 569-583	Summer	15 verses	short
G. 584-585	Rains	2 verses	shortest
-	[Autumn]	0 verses	"shortest"
G. 586-594	Winter	9 verses	long
G. 595-605	Spring	11 verses	short
G. 606-639	Summer	34 verses	long
G. 640-655	Rains	16 verses	longest
G. 656-657	Autumn	2 verses	"intermediate"
[G. 658 End of the passage]			

If we look at the passage from its middle point, G. 584-585, Rains and the absent Autumn, we see this:



G. 513-583, 71 verses, describe the seasons of a year, from the Rains through Summer; G. 586-657, 72 verses, describe another year, from Winter through Autumn. Look at the alternation of the lengths of the descriptions in the first year: intermediate / longest / short / long / short. In the second year we see: long / short / long / longest / intermediate. If the poet had made the middle passage the longest one on the Rains, the alternation, in the second year and the symmetry of the two years would have been perfect. As it is, it is almost perfect. I have already pointed to the intermediate lengths of the descriptions at the beginning and end. There is one more point. At G. 535, 22 verses after the beginning, the longest description - in absolute sense - of a season begins: Spring, G. 535-567, 33 verses. At G. 606, 20 verses after the beginning of our second year at G. 586, the longest description in this year begins: Summer, G. 606-639, 34 verses.

The independence of a Kāvya verse is well known. It is often a miniature. They are placed one after the other like slides. But the poet does not pile verses one upon the other and sees where he gets. What we see here is a composition, a design, for I do not think that what we see here is due to chance.

### § 3. *Landscapes in the seasons*

G. 513-658 is not the only section wherein there is a succession of the seasons. In G. 738-796, the section which deals with the king's love life after his return to his capital, there are the following implicit or explicit references: G. 744 Summer; G. 745, 746, 760 Rains; G. 779, 783, 784, 786-790 Winter; G. 791 Spring; G. 795 Summer. Some references are directly connected with the subject matter: "the king wantingly (showing) a laxity in summer dress" at G. 744; ornaments made of the flowers of the season: G. 745, 760, 779, 784, 786 f.; in some cases they are related to it less directly: the influence of nature on the characters: G. 746 f., 791. Sometimes there is no relation at all: flowers of Jan./March in G. 788-90. At G. 783 the use of wax on lips is caused by the cold season. This section is not on the seasons: it is on love. The function that the references to the seasons seem to have is to show the period of time described: more than a year. And although

Autumn is wanting in the passage, it seems to tell that the king's amorous activities leave nothing to be desired at any season.

Although the terms "description of the seasons" and similar have been used in the preceding sections, they are correct to an extent only. The descriptions are there, but the passage G. 513-658 is not dealing with the seasons in their own right, it is about landscapes described in the various seasons. About a third of the verses does not contain any indication to a season. The succession of the seasons serves as a framework for the descriptions of landscapes. Of course, it has the same function as that in the love section, that of time-indicator. The alternation of the landscapes described is caused by the space transversed (see § 1, end) and by time. The time dimension has been chosen by the poet to structure this description. There is here no "contempt of epic form" Warder objects to (see § 1, beginning). The *Gauḍavaha* is no epic, it is a panegyric. And there is no "contempt of form", because the passage is structured.

When we raise the question: Which particular landscapes were seen in which seasons by the army that was victorious in the farthest quarters (i.e. everywhere)? we get the following answers:

Lakes and ponds: 513-516, Rains; 517-523 Autumn; 542 f., 554-556 Spring; 571, 578 Summer; 585 Rains; 630 Summer; 657 Autumn.

Rivers: 525 Autumn; 544 Spring; 579, 582 (v.l.), 619 Summer.

Mountains: 524 Autumn; 533 Winter; 562 Spring; 614-618, 620-623, 625, 633, 636-639 Summer; 640-643, 645 f., 648 Rains.

Villages and houses, \*fields, \*\*fruit trees, \*\*\* people: 526, 532 Autumn; 536, 545 Spring; \*587 f. Winter; \*\*596, \*\*\*597, 598, \*\*599, \*\*601, \*602, \*\*\*603, \*\*605 Spring; \*\*606, 608, 609, \*\*\*632, \*\*633-635 Summer; 644 (city), 645 Rains.

Lowland, marshy lands: 527-531 Autumn; 562 f. Spring; flooded land: 651 Rains.

Jungle: 538-541, 546, 553, 567 Spring; 572 f., 575, 577 Summer; 589 f. Winter; 595 Spring; 611-613 Summer; 654 Rains.

So, generalizing we can say that the hero's army was victorious anywhere in any season. The function of the passage as a whole is to add an element to the portrait of the hero as a *cakravartin*. From Kauṭilya Aś 9, 1, 18 we know that a *cakravartin*'s territory is enclosed by the Himālayas and the oceans. The former are mentioned at G. 511 f.; cf. 636; the oceans are mentioned at G. 417, 430 and 470, E, S, W resp., in the passage preceding the one under discussion. Kauṭ. Aś 9, 1, 19 ff. describe the land of a *cakravartin* in terms of types of terrain: "forests land, village land, mountainous land, marshy land, dry land, level land and uneven land" (transl. Kangle 1972, II, 407), and state that the emperor must choose the terrain most suitable for attacking his enemies. From our passage, G. 513-658, we learn that this choice was not difficult at all; the hero attacked victoriously on any terrain in any season, thus meeting one of the requirements for *cakravartinship*.

## APPENDIX

For some general remarks see § 2,2.

Unless stated otherwise the identification of the plants/trees mentioned can be found in Meulenbeld 1974.

Abbreviations:

CS, Cold Season; HS, Hot Season; RS, Rainy Season; fl.: flower(s), flowering.

*G. 513-516, Rains*

513:*jalakalamba* in flower: *kalamba* = Skt. *kadamba*; at G. 567 the *Nauclea cadamba* Roxb., which flowers Dec./July (Brandis 1906, 367 f.), is referred to. Here, as at G. 360, 368, 378 and 653, we see the *Nauclea cordifolia* Roxb., which flowers in the R.S. (Roxburgh s.a., 172 f.). The latter is also called *dhārākadamba* (Meulenbeld 1974, 535 f.); I take it that *jala*° has the same function as *dhārā*° in specifying the species *cordifolia*.

516: "fragrant perfume of *jambus*, whose young buds shoot forth from the cool season onwards": Maybe, *Ardisia humilis* Vahl, which flowers "at all seasons, chiefly March-June" (Brandis 1906, 418). With this identification the appearance of the buds might refer to the chief flowering time.

*G. 517-532, Autumn*

517:*kāyamba*, Skt. *kādamba*, Indian Bar-headed goose: This migrant bird returns to India in Oct./Nov. (Ali-Ripley 1983, I, 132 f.), somewhat later than the greylags (*op. cit.*, 130).

521: dehydrated flat frogs: cf. Bāṇa HC, ch. III, first prose sentence: the beginning of Autumn is hostile to frogs.

525: rare shoots of *kāśa* grass: *Saccharum spontaneum* Linn.; cf. SRK 283, Ṛtusamhāra 3, 1 f. and Kālidāsa Rgh. 4, 17, where it is mentioned in Autumn too.

530: blossom of the *niculas*: *nicula* either = *rotan*, the fl. time of which I do not know, or = *Barringtonia acutangula* Gaertn. (Meulenbeld 1988, 443), which is said to flower Dec./May (Brandis 1906, 330), HS (Drury 1982, 1, 447), beginning of the RS (Roxburgh s.a., 446); so the Autumn, which we expect here (see also the next verse) is the only sea-

son that is not mentioned. The problem we are faced with here was mentioned in § 2,2.

532:*bāla-saraya*, early Autumn.

G. 533-534, Winter

533:reddish full-grown fruits of the *khajjūra*, Skt. *kharjūra*: Phoenix silvestris Roxb.; the fruits are yellowish or reddish (Roxburgh s.a., 723); they are ripe Sept./Oct. (Brandis 1906, 645).

- strong fragrance of the *karamanda*, Skt. *karamarda* (Turner CDIAL 2799): Carissa diffusa Roxb. Its flowers are scented; it flowers Jan./May (Brandis 1906, 455 f.).

534:red-brown *karīra* flowers with (long) hairy stamens: Capparis aphylla Roth. Fl. Oct./June; the stamens are long with this genus (Brandis 1906, 33 f.); flowers are red-brown (FOBI I, 175).

G. 535-567, Spring

535:*arkas* in flower: Calotropis gigantea R.Br. = Asclepias gigantea Willd. (Das 1988, 252; Drury (1866) 1982, II, 222); in flower all the year round (Roxburgh s.a., 251).

553:new *palāsa* flowers; Skt. *palāśa*: Butea fronsosa Roxb.; fl. in March and April (Brandis 1906, 230).

567:blooming *kadambas* variegated with old fruits: Nauclea cadamba Roxb.; fl. HS, see above ad G. 513. The "old fruits" are of the previous year (comm. Haripāla).

- *palāśas* (see ad G. 553) with a double set of foliage through the pods: The tree sheds its leaves in the cold season. They appear again together with the flowers (Roxburgh s.a., 540) or acc. to Blatter-Millard (1977, 14) in April or early May; the latter add: «The pale-green pods develop very quickly and in April the leafless trees, covered with green pods, give the impression of being in full foliage». The poet is likely to have seen the trees in early May, with its, then, double "foliage".

G. 569-583, Summer

569:*gimha*: Summer

583:perfume of *karahāḍa*, Skt. *karahāṭa*, flowers with buff °*vaṭṭhas*: the Hindi name derived from it is *karhār*, *Vangueria spinosa*, acc. to Turner CDIAL 2802. It flowers at the beginning of the HS, acc. to Roxburgh, who does not speak of any fragrance in this case (Roxburgh s.a., -180). Brandis (1906) mentions *karhar* thrice as a vernacular name of a species, viz. on pp. 80; 271 and 380 (see p. 711), out of which the latter two only are said to be fragrant: *Albizzia odoratissima* Benth., fl. April/June, and *Gardenia turgida* Roxb., fl. HS. Which tree is intended is hard to say, the more so because I do not know what the buff °*vaṭṭhas* might refer to. What is the Skt. equivalent, *prṣṭa* or *vastra*? Anyhow, the tree intended may very well flower in Summer, and that is sufficient for the present purpose.

G. 584-585, *Rains*

584:flowering *kadambas*: *Nauclea cordifolia* Roxb., fl. RS, see ad G, 513.

585:perfume of *priyaṅgu*: Meulenbeld (1974, 578) lists 13 plants s.v. *priyaṅgu*; the one intended here may be *Aglaia odoratissima* Blume, which fl. in the RS and the CS (Brandis 1906, 142).

- nectar of full-grown lotuses: Lotuses are said to flower “nearly all the year” (Drury - 1864 - 1982, I, 30-r f.), but I have seen them dead and dry at the end of December at Lucknow. So this verse points to the RS rather than to the Cs.

G. 586-594, *Winter*

586:*sisira*:- Late Winter

- *marubaka* thickly covered with buds: At G. 784 (cf. 786) also this plant is said to flower in Winter. Which of the eight species listed by Meulenbeld (1974, 588 f.) is intended is hard to say. As far as I am aware there is no creeper among them; consequently *maruvayassa vallisu* must mean “in the twigs of the *marubakas*”; for *vallī*, ‘twig, branch’ cf. G. 1124 and *Hāla* 322 (v.l.).
- bright flowers of the *kunda*: *Jasminum pubescens* Willd.; fl. from Jan. to April (Brandis 1906, 449); its flowers are “pure white” (Roxburgh s.a., 449).

- 587 f.:ripening *yava*: barley, "is much cultivated in most of the temperate parts of Hindoostan during cool season" (Roxburgh s.a., 120).  
 592:*sisira*: Late Winter; this verse occurs in one of the four mss., Dc, only.  
 593:scent of *kañcaṇāras*: *Bauhinia variegata* Linn. (MW, cf. Turner CDIAL 3014; Brandis 1906, 258); fl. Febr./May (Brandis, *loc. cit.*).  
 594:buds of the *mādhavīs* that burst open: *Hiptage madablota* Gaertn. (Meulenbeld 1988, 448); fl. Jan./March (Brandis 1906, 108).

*G. 595-605, Spring*

- 595:various colours of new foliage  
 596: *mahu*, Skt. *madhu*: Spring  
 At G. 599, 601 and 606 the *cūya*, Skt. *cūta*, is mentioned: *Mangifera indica* Linn. (Meulenbeld 1988, 438); at G. 596 and 605 the same tree is called *sahayāra*, Skt. *sahakāra*; for the latter identification see Meulenbeld 1974, 607 + 527.  
 its panicles are large with small purple flowers; its flowering time is Febr./April; fruits May/July; its drupes are yellow when ripe (Brandis 1906, 206).  
 596:the tips of the panicles of the mangoes are sparsely green on account of fructification.  
 599:bunches of mangoflowers variegated with bees which are sparsely sitting on them: the flowers have become rarer.  
 601:mango fruits not completely ripe yet  
 603:*māhava*, Skt. *mādhava*: Spring  
 604:*mahu-muhammi*: at the beginning of Spring  
 605:bees get mango nectar with difficulty only

*G. 606-639, Summer*

- 606:ripe mangoes  
 612:fruits of the *mālūra* that have become lighter owing to dehydration during maturation: *Aegle marmelos* Corr. (MW, cf. Ingalls 1965, notes ad SRK 1191 and 1343). It flowers in the HS (Brandis 1906, 119) and its fruits ripen after the rains (Roxburgh s.a., 429). Both here and at G. 633 ff. we must assume we have to do with the fruits of the previous year; cf. ad G. 567; *mālūra* fruits are mentioned at G. 654, too, in the RS.

633-635:ripe cocos nuts, *nālikerī*, *Cocos nucifera* Linn. (Meulenbeld 1988, 443) and ripe *tāḍī*, *tālī*, *Corypha umbraculifera* Linn. (Meulenbeld 1988, 439), the toddy palm. The fruits of the cocos are ripe Oct./Nov. (Roxburgh s.a., 665). Cf. above ad G. 612. [*taṇarāya*, Skt. *trṇarāja*, may refer to both the cocos and toddy palm (Das 1988, 217)].

#### G. 640-655, Rains

640:*vāsāgama*, Skt. *varṣāgama*: beginning of the Rainy Season

648:“Here, the fragrance of *kesaras*, which were dried up under the trees, (but) came into contact with water, spreads, intensely sweet as the smell of old liquor (produced) with ferments”: *kesara* occurs 22 times in the *Gauḍavaha*. The places where it means ‘manes’ or ‘filaments’ will not detain us. At G. 593 it is unclear whether it refers to filaments or to a particular tree. At G. 653 it defies identification. At G. 256 and 966 it means *Crocus sativus* Linn. At G. 795 it is = *Mesua ferrea* Linn. At G. 1087 the equation with *bakula*, *Mimusops elengi* Linn., is certain because of the *dohada* motif there; this identification will do also at G. 365. I guess it is intended here too. The *M. elengi* is fragrant and flowers “chiefly during the hot season” (Roxburgh s.a., 318). The context here is concerned with the rains. Notice, however, that the poet mentions dry flowers under the trees, and that (Kālidāsa) RS 2, 25 mentions the *bakula* as a flower of the RS. Like the perfume of the *bakula* (see Sabnis 1966, 345) that of the *kesara* is compared to the smell of liquor: Kālidāsa Rgh. 9, 36; from Kāl. KS 8, 76 we infer that the *kesara* is fragrant esp. when it is wet. So this verse refers to the beginning of the RS; the next verse speaks of the “first shower”.

653:blossoming *kadambas*: *Nauclea cordifolia* Roxb., see ad G. 513.

654:*jala-samaya*: Rainy Season

- winds are fragrant with the sapless pulp of *mālūras*, which is reddish, now it is moistened with water: if *mālūra* = *Aegle marmelos* (see ad G. 612; the problem here is similar), all these properties can be accounted for: its pulp is *virasa*, ‘sapless’, as it contains gluten (Roxburgh s.a., 429); according to Brandis (1906, 119) it is “thick, orange-coloured, sweet, aromatic” and according to Chopra (1958, 267) “the dried pulp is pale orange or flesh-coloured and when mixed with water yields a pleasant orange-coloured ‘sherbet’ ...”. The botanical literature I have consulted do not say anything about the period the fruits are present on the trees.



## G. 656-657, Autumn

## 657:saraya: Autumn

- nectar in the *sinduvāras*: either *Vitex negundo* Linn. or *V. trifolia* Linn. (Emeneau 1944). The latter cannot be intended here, because it flowers in April and May (Drury 1982, 2, 509). The former is said to flower "all the year round" (Roxburgh s.a., 481) or "May/Dec." (Brandis 1906, 504). Just as in this G. verse, the flowering time in Bāṇa's Kādambarī (quoted by Emeneau *op. cit.*, 337; ed. Peterson p. 129) is after the end of the rainy season.

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